

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MUSCAT 00800 271046Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 648

S E C R E T MUSCAT 800

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, MU, US

SUBJECT: VISIT BY SULTAN QABOOS

REF: STATE 259542

1. FONMIN ZAWAWI INVITED ME TO MINISTRY THIS MORNING, HIS FIRST DAY HERE FOLLOWING NOV. 19-25 VISIT IRAN AND NOV. 26 TRIP TO SALALAH FOR AUDIENCE WITH SULTAN. HE SAID SULTAN WOULD NOW LIKE TO FINALIZE ARRANGEMENTS FOR EARLY JANUARY VISIT TO U.S.

2. I RESPONDED THAT I STILL LACKED FINAL AUTHORITY TO DISCUSS DETAILS, BUT THAT HOPEFULLY WOULD BE IN POSITION DO SO ANY DAY NOW. SAID THAT AS YET HIGH LEVEL USG APPROVAL NOT OBTAINED, BUT EXPRESSED HOPE IT WOULD BE FORTHCOMING AND PROMISED LET ZAWAWI KNOW AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE. ZAWAWI ACCEPTED THIS RESPONSE AT FACE VALUE, THOUGH HIS FACE RECORDED SOME SURPRISE.

3. HE CONFIRMED SULTAN PLANS DEPART OMAN FOR EUROPE ON DEC. 10 AND TO PROCEED FROM EUROPE TO U.S. FOR (PREFERABLY) JAN. 7 ARRIVAL. SIZE HIS PARTY TO U.S. ESTIMATED AT 10 TO 12 PERSONS, WITH FLIGHT ABOARD SULTAN'S OWN VC-10 AIRCRAFT WHICH IS IN FINAL STAGES OF RENOVATION BEFORE OFFICIAL DELIVERY TO HIM.

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4. ZAWAWI SAID HE COULD TELL ME IN CONFIDENCE SULTAN WILL

PAY ONE-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO PARIS DEC. 19 FOR MEETING
WITH FRENCH PRESIDENT.

5. ZAWAWI COMMENTED SULTAN (WHO IS CURRENTLY ON WEEK-LONG
VISIT TO SALALAH) NOW IS TALKING OF LIMITING HIS TOTAL STAY
IN U.S. TO ABOUT THREE DAYS IN WASHINGTON. HE, ZAWAWI, AND
OTHERS ARE ENCOURAGING HIM TO STICK TO ORIGINAL IDEA OF AT
LEAST 7 OR 8 DAYS IN U.S. HE ADDED THIS CAN BEST BE
RESOLVED IF AND WHEN I PROVIDE FINAL USG APPROVAL AND
DETAILS OF SUGGESTED WASHINGTON PROGRAM.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MUSCAT00800
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740344-0366
From: MUSCAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t1974118/aaaaagce.tel
Line Count: 72
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: STATE 259542
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: boyleja
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 MAY 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <17 MAR 2003 by boyleja>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT BY SULTAN QABOOS
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, MU, US, (QABUS, SULTAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005